

Message Text

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FODAG

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HIME AND WITCHER

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: FAO, OCON, EAGR

SUBJ: SECOND REPORT OF U.S. DELGATION ON FAO REGIONAL

CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST, TUNIS, OCTOBER 4-12,
1976

REF: TUNIS 7026

SUMMARY: ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES MADE STATEMENTS ON SUBJECT MATTER OF INTEREST TO THEM. EIGHTEEN OF THE DELEGATIONS GAVE SOLID SUPPORT TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR HIS NEW ORIENTATION OF FAO. DR. SAOUMA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS SUPPORT. THE INTRODUCTION OF AGENDA ITEMS AND A SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS ON EACH ARE REPORTED. NEW REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR CGFPI AND CGIAR WERE ELECTED. DELEGATES STRONGLY SUPPORTED STRENGTHENING USE OF ARABIC LANGUAGE. CONFERENCE APPROVED LENGTHY REPORT WITH PRACTICALLY NO DEBATE. SHORT SINGLE DECLARATION REPLACED USUAL NUMEROUS RESOLUTIONS. END SUMMARY

1. STATEMENTS MADE BY 21 MEMBER COUNTRIES DURING MOST OF 2 DAYS REFLECTED INTEREST IN 12 AREAS OF SUBJECT MATTER. AREAS MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED WERE ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, IRRIGATION AND WATER USE, FISHERIES, CAPITAL INVESTMENT
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IN AGRICULTURE, COOPERATIVES AND FARM CREDIT, EXTENSION WORK

AND STAFF TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM FAO.

2. AN OUTSTANDING FEATURE OF THE COUNTRY STATEMENTS WAS THE SOLID SUPPORT GIVEN BY 18 DELEGATIONS TO THE NEW PROGRAM OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL. AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST DAY OF THIS AGENDA ITEM, AFTER 13 DELEGATIONS HAD SPOKEN OF WHICH 11 HAD SUPPORTED THE NEW ORIENTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION, DR. SAOUMA VOICED HIS APPRECIATION AND REITERATED HIS DETERMINATION TO CARRY OUT THE PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE FAO COUNCIL AND OUTLINED IN HIS STATEMENTS TO THE CONFERENCE AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED IN SEPTEL.

3. INTRODUCTION BY SECRETARIAT OF FAO NEAR EAST GOVERNMENT COOPERATIVE PROGRAM, BASED ON DOCUMENT NERC 76/3, PROVIDED ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF FINANCING OF APPROVED PROJECTS LISTED BUT NO NEW APPROVED PROJECTS WERE REPORTED. REGIONAL PROJECTS OF DLR 6.8 MILLION AND NATIONAL PROJECTS OF DLR 8.3 MILLION HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY DONORS. ELEVEN COUNTRIES PARTICIPATED IN DEBATE ON THIS AGENDA ITEM. WHILE THERE WAS SOME CRITICISM ABOUT SLOW ACTION, THERE WAS GENERAL RECOGNITION THAT PROGRAM IS NEW INVOLVING THREE-WAY COOPERATION OF RECIPIENT AND DONOR COUNTRIES WITH FAO IN COORDINATING ROLE. PRESENT PROJECTS WILL BE CONFINED TO COUNTRIES OF REGION. AT CLOSE OF DEBATE FAO REGIONAL DIRECTOR STRESSED THAT NEW THINGS TAKE TIME, THAT HE WANTS TO START PROGRAM ON FIRM FOUNDATION AND HOPES TO SEE GOOD PROGRESS FOR UTILIZING REMAINING HALF OF AVAILABLE FUNDS WHICH TOTAL DLR 29 MILLION FROM 6 COUNTRIES, DLR 10 MILLION OF WHICH PROVIDED BY SAUDI ARABIA.

4. FOR AGENDA ITEM PERTAINING TO EXPERIENCES IN AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS IN THE NEAR EAST REGION, SECRETARIAT DISTRIBUTED DOCUMENT NERC 76/4. THE ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCING FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WERE REVIEWED NOTING PAST EMPHASIS ON WATER PROJECTS WHICH STILL LEAD LIST OF PRIORITIES THAT INCLUDE IRRIGATION, THE DEVELOPMENT OF RAIN-FED LANDS, LIVESTOCK PROJECTS, FISHERIES PROJECTS, GRAIND AND PACKING OF FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES, PROCESSING OF FATS AND OILS, BUILDINGS FOR GRAIN STORAGE, PROJECTS DEVELOPING USE OF NEW SEEDS AND USE IN REQUIRED INPUT PACKAGE. AOS ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS THAT PROVIDE FERTILIZER, PESTICIDES AND FARM MACHINERY WOULD BE CONSIDERED. COMMENTS BY 9 DELEGATIONS STRESSED THE UNCLASSIFIED

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NEED FOR PROJECTS TO BE FITTED TO INTEGRATED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE REGIONA HAD THE FINANCIAL, HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE, THEREFORE INTERNAL FINANCING, TRAINING OF PLANNING UNITS AND A SPEEDING UP OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION WERE AREAS FOR CONCENTRATION OF ATTENTION BY MEMBER COUNTRIES AND FAO. IT WAS NOTED THAT FAO WAS SCHEDULING A REGIONAL TRAINING COURSE IN PROJECT PLANNING DURING 1977.

5. SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT NERC 76/5 ON PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EXPLOITATION OF FISHERY RESOURCES IN THE REGION WAS WELL RECEIVED BY THE 9 COUNTRIES THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE DEBATE. THIS WAS FIRST TIME SPECIFIC SUBJECT OF FISHERIES WAS ON AGENDA OF NEAR EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE. POTENTIAL OF AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT GIVEN CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION BY DELEGATES. FAO DATA ON RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PELEGIC AND DEMERSAL FISH RESOURCES FOR REGION QUESTIONED.

6. CONFERENCE APPROVED PROPOSAL THAT A FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE NEAR EAST BE ESTABLISHED AND ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE INLAND FISHERIES INSTITUTE IN PAKISTAN WHICH WAS EARLIER ESTABLISHED AS AN FAO ASSISTED PROGRAM, SHOULD BE FULLY UTILIZED AS A REGIONAL INSTITUTE.

7. DEVELOPING AGRO-INDUSTRIES INCLUDING FOOD INDUSTRIES AND PROSPECTS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN MARKETING PROCESSED PRODUCTS (NERC/76/6) WAS INTRODUCED BY THE SECRETARIAT BUT THERE WERE ONLY TWO BRIEF INTERVENTIONS, BOTH OF WHICH WERE MADE TO STATE AGREEMENT WITH THE SECRETARIAT'S DOCUMENTATION AND PRESENTATION. NO ISSUES WERE RAISED CONCERNING THIS ITEM.

8. REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF MARGINAL LANDS THROUGH FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT, RANGE MANAGEMENT, RAIN-FED AGRICULTURE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC MEASURES, FEW SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WERE RAISED BY THE 12 MEMBER NATIONS THAT INTERVENED TO ELUCIDATE PROGRESS MADE BY THEIR COUNTRIES. MANY STATEMENTS WERE UNNECESSARILY PROTRACTED. GROUP AGREED TO RECOMMEND SURVEY OF MARGINAL LANDS IN REGION TO COPE WITH DEGRADATION OF THESE LANDS. THEY ALSO RECOMMENDED ESTABLISHMENT OF DESERT CRREP AND RANGE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE AS RECOMMENDED AT 12TH NEAR EAST CONFERENCE. LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC FINANCED EARLY FEASIBILITY STUDY AND WOULD RECOMMEND LIBYA AS SITE FOR INSTITUTE.

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9. THIS WAS FIRST TIME THAT TOPIC "DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT" HAS BEEN DISCUSSED IN A REGIONAL CONFERENCE. THE SECRETARIAT'S PAPER WAS GENERALLY SATISFACTORY TO THE 10 COUNTRY DELEGATIONS THAT INTERVENED FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC. MOST DELEGATES GAVE THEIR EXPERIENCE IN HELPING RURAL POPULATIONS TO EFFICIENTLY UTILIZE RESOURCES MENTIONING THE FOLLOWING: FOCUS RESEARCH ON PRACTICAL PROBLEMS, BETTER UTILIZATION OF EXTENSION WORK AND TRAINING, WORK ON PROBLEM OF ILLITERACY AMONG RURAL PEOPLE, STRESS ROLE OF COOPERATIVES, PROVIDE FARM CREDIT, INVOLVE FARMERS IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, GIVE ATTENTION TO INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO KEEP YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE BY CONSIDERING HEALTH AND SOCIAL ASPECTS NOT JUST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THERE WAS NO EXTENSIVE DEBATE ON THE ISSUE OF FRAGMENTATION OF HOLDINGS EXCEPT TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE PROBLEM EXISTS. MINOR ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE PROBLEMS OF PASTORAL POPULATION IN REGION. MOST OF THE COUNTRIES INTERVENING ON THIS AGENDA ITEM HAVE CURRENT EXPERIENCE WITH LAND REFORM AND WERE FRANK IN EXPRESSING VIEWS AND EXCHANGING EXPERIENCES.

10. TWO AGENDA ITEMS - CONCLUSION OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND MEETINGS OF INTEREST AS WELL AS REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF REGIONAL PROJECTS WERE CONSIDERED TOGETHER IN INTEREST OF MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME. TEN COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES PARTICIPATED IN THE DEBATE OF THESE TWO ITEMS. FIVE SUPPORTED THE REGIONAL LAND AND WATER PROJECTS. THREE GAVE SUPPORT TO THE FIELD FOOD CROPS PROJECT THAT APPEARS TO BE IN SERIOUS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES
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WITH THE REDUCTION OF UNDP SUPPORT. ALTHOUGH SIX GOVERNMENTS SPOKE FAVORABLY ABOUT THE ANIMAL PRODUCTION AND HEALTH PROJECT, IRAQ POINTED OUT THAT COOPERATING COUNTRIES MUST PROVIDE THE PROMISED FINANCIAL SUPPORT. THERE WAS SCATTERED INTEREST IN PLANT PROTECTION, GERM PLASM CONSERVATION, POST HARVEST LOSSES AND HORTICULTURE. CYPRUS AND SAUDI ARABIA SUGGESTED THAT THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR SUBMIT TO THE NEXT FAO CONFERENCE A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF PROGRESS OF REGIONAL PROJECTS.

1. THE MAJOR ACTION OF THE CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO THE REGION WAS THE UNANIMOUS ELECTION OF JORDAN TO REPLACE SYRIA AND SUDAN TO CONTINUE AS REPRESENTATIVES OF NEAR EAST REGION IN THE CGFPI AND IRAQ AND TUNISIA TO REPLACE PAKISTAN AND EGYPT AS THE NEW REPRESENTATIVES TO CGIAR FOR 2 YEARS COMMENCING JANUARY 1977.

12. MANDEFIELD, ASST. DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR GENERAL AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF DIRECTOR GENERAL SAOUMA INTRODUCED THE AGENDA ITEM ON STRENGTHENING THE USE OF ARABIC. HE GAVE A BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE PATHS FOLLOWED BY FAO, DISCUSSED THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE UN AND SPECIALIZED BODIES AND CLOSED WITH PROSPECTS AND PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES. MENTIONING THAT THE 1978/79 FAO BUDGET WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARATION, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE PRIORITY GIVEN TO THE NEW TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM, DECENTRALIZATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, PROBLEMS DEVELOPING AS A RESULT OF LOSS OF UNDP FUNDS FOR COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES AND CONTINGENCY INCREASES DUE TO INFLATION. HE STRESSED THAT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL WOULD GO AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN USE OF ARABIC IN THE ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS BEEN A PIONEER AMONG INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IN THE USE OF THIS LANGUAGE. IN CLOSING MANDEFIELD CITED A CCLM STATEMENT MADE AT THE 26TH SESSION OF THE FAO CONFERENCE IN 1972 WHICH HE FELT WAS A BALANCED VIEW ON THE MATTER OF LANGUAGE.

13. SEVENTEEN COUNTRIES LEAD BY LEBANON ENTERED THE DEBATE STRESSING THAT THERE WAS NO REASON TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN OFFICIAL AND WORKING LANGUAGES OF THE ORGANIZATION AND RECOMMENDED AMENDING ARTICLE 41 OF THE BASIC TEXT TO DELETE THE WORDS "THE LIMITED USE OF ARABIC". UNANIMOUS SUPPORT WAS GIVEN TO THE PROPOSAL INCLUDING IRAN, PAKISTAN, SOMALI AND AFGHANISTAN WHO SPOKE IN ENGLISH. MANDEFIELD SUGGESTED THAT THE DRAFT REPORT

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SHOULD SUGGEST THAT THE RECOMMENDATION BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE CCLM. SAUDI ARABIA PROPOSED THAT THE CONFERENCE EXPRESS THANKS TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR STEPS TAKEN SO FAR TO STRENGTHEN USE OF ARABIC POINTING OUT THAT THIS LANGUAGE WILL BE IN USE FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA IN NOVEMBER 1976.

14. REVIEW OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR WAS IN EFFECT A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS AND PRECEDED THE CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE. THERE WAS NO DEBATE.

15. INVITATIONS WERE EXTENDED BY SYRIA, IRAQ AND CYPRUS TO HOLD THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE PARTICIPANTS LEFT THE DECISION TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL.

16. THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE, CONSISTING OF 130 PARAGRAPHS PREPARED BY THE 8 COUNTRY-DRAFTING COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY EGYPT, WAS APPROVED WITH MINIMUM DEBATE ON A FEW PARAGRAPHS IN THE FINAL TWO HOURS OF THE CONFERENCE ON OCTOBER 11. THERE WERE NO RESOLUTIONS BUT A DECLARATION APPROVED BY THE CONFERENCE IS REPORTED IN SEPTE).

17. CONFERENCE CLOSED AS IT WAS OPENED BEFORE TELEVISION CAMERAS. PRESS CONVERAGE IN LOCAL FRENCH AND ARABIC DAILY PAPERS WAS EXTENSIVE.VOLPE

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